

# **A Report on Crime Prevention and Rebuilding the Brentwood Community Submitted by the Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **Executive Summary**

Crime diminishes the quality of life, public safety and deters business development in Brentwood, Maryland. Complaints regarding an increase in the volume of crime in our town prompted the Town Council to appoint a committee to research the sources of crime, the types of crime, current crime restriction efforts, and to make recommendations as to how to reduce crime.

The Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee (BACAC or hereafter referred to as the Committee) was formed by the Council in December of 2007 and began work in February 2008. Five residents of Brentwood volunteered and were nominated to serve in this effort: Shawn Cassatt, Barbara House, Laura Rogers, Xzavier Wright, and Nina Young.

The majority of the Committee's research was done by interviewing multiple police agents who protect Brentwood and the surrounding areas: the Contract Police and the Mt. Rainier officer who serve Brentwood, the Mt. Rainier Police, a couple of levels of Prince George's County Police and the Park Police. The committee also interviewed representatives of Neighborhood Watch, Mt. Rainier-Brentwood-Hyattsville Boys and Girls Club, and Congressman Van Hollen's office. Members of the community were welcome to attend the meetings, and also offered feedback.

## **The Problem Defined**

The Committee found that the layers of police protection in Brentwood are remarkably effective, yet crime persists. In almost every interview the police informed the Committee as to how to contact them and which situations to report. Repeatedly, the Committee learned processes that they had not known as residents of Brentwood. Communication to residents is lacking, in what the police are doing, how they are informed, and what residents can safely and legally do to help.

The types of crime most common to Brentwood are non-violent: breaking and entering, theft, drug trafficking, and prostitution (usually related to drug use). Brentwood needs clear concise crime statistics that are specific to Brentwood and will allow the tracking of trends criminal activity. One of the most interesting, and troubling, findings is that a large portion of those crimes in Brentwood are committed by the same offenders repeatedly. Because of Prince George's lax sentencing criminals are convicted repeatedly and given minimal sentences. They are released, commit the crime again, and are again convicted. Lack of a police force combined with these repeat offenders portrays the town as a haven for criminals.

Another persistent problem that is difficult to deal with is the number of "Hot Spots." The Committee defined Hot Spots as a location where criminal activity is suspected or observed repeatedly, based on the interviews (Figure 1). Police dedicated significant resources to close down one hot spot (i.e. the drug market on Quincy Street), only to have the participants move to

other locations. One note: not all hot spots or locations are specifically named in this report. Moreover, hot spots frequently change. For example, enforcement efforts focused on one hot spot may cause another to emerge. Consequently, omission of a particular address does not imply that they are not causes for concern.

There has been an increase in graffiti in Brentwood, a clear indicator of increased gang activity. With the lack of a community center and a deficit of youth programs young people of the neighborhood do not have a place to for healthy activities such as sports, or performing arts. Gang type activity is a way to fill their time.

## **Recommendations to the Town Council**

There are several actions that the Town Council can take to reduce the rate of crime in our town. Based on our research the committee developed recommendations that fall into three categories: Communication, Outreach, and Community Initiatives; Police Protection; Additional Actions to Improve Public Safety and Encourage Business Involvement. These recommendations are inexpensive to implement, but most of them will require volunteer hours and leadership from the Council and from the community. The recommendations below are cross-referenced to the report by their number.

### **Communication, Outreach, and Community Initiatives**

#### *Information and Home Assessments*

Inform and encourage residents on how to become actively involved in their safety documenting suspicious activity, documenting actions that might be associated with drug trafficking, and calling the police when such activity is spotted. Residents should be informed in using tip-lines (see discussion below) and encouraged to watch out for one another: know who is home during the day, and report anything that seems out of place or out of the ordinary. This information should be regularly posted on the cable channel, newsletter, and website [II(A)-1].

Produce and distribute refrigerator magnets and/or small brochures with the appropriate phone numbers and instructions to contact police to report non-emergency activity and suspicious activity, or instructions to call 911 in case of emergency. Both the magnet and the pamphlet should be in English and Spanish, and should be easy to read [III(B)-1].

Inform residents and encourage them to participate in a home safety assessments offered by the police, designate days when the community police officer would be available to conduct the inspection [III(C)-5].

Promote training for senior citizens so they will know what action to take to protect themselves and reduce their vulnerability [III(C)-5].

Develop and conduct a survey of residents regarding public safety perceptions and to gather information on criminal activity and emerging hotspots (e.g do they feel safe, what are the phone numbers to call for police assistance). A group should go door-to-door to ask residents to participate in the public safety survey and leave information on how to call the police to report suspicious activity, start a neighborhood watch, or schedule home safety assessment (see recommendation below) [III(C)-1].

Use the newsletter, Web site, and cable channel to broadcast information to increase community awareness and improve public safety. Advertise the availability of publications including pamphlets, magnets, and home security check lists. [III(C)-3]

### *Publicizing Crime Statistics*

Provide crime statistics updated maps marking hot spots of criminal activity to residents on a monthly basis; this information should be published on the Website, posted in Town Hall, and provided to the contract police and the Committee [II(B)-1].

Publish crime statistics for Brentwood in the monthly newsletter and Cpl. Kenworthy continue to write a “crime or public safety corner” to the newsletter, addressing safety issues, providing tips, and highlighting areas of concern [III(F)-1].

Include a crime blog on the town’s website (similar to Chief Scott’s of Mt. Rainier) and devote a portion of the website to educating citizens about crime, the resources available, and how to report crime [III(F)-2].

### *Workshops and Training*

Schedule a workshop inviting representatives from VINE and the Maryland Crime Victims' Compensation Program to educate residents on these two programs [II(C)-4].

Schedule a workshop for the PG County Gang Unit to give a presentation about gangs to Brentwood citizens and the Council [II(D)-1].

At least every other month dedicate some time or a workshop to discuss public safety issues with Brentwood’s MOU and contract officers. The discussions should be mediated to provide everyone with the opportunity to express their views [III(D)-1].

Schedule a workshop with Sgt. Davis to brief residents about the Community Response Team program and the Citizen Advisory Council of PG County and discuss how Brentwood can participate in the programs [III(E)-1].

Schedule a workshop to bring together community based organizations and Brentwood residents to develop a public safety plan, identify grant support, and strengthen, educate and take back our community from crime.

### *Community Initiatives*

Promote community development with events in the park, e.g. “screen on the green.” With summer coming a screen on the green program could be a good way to build community spirit and increase awareness about public safety. Information could be distributed prior to the movie to promote public safety and the costs could be offset by local groups sponsoring the refreshments for that evening [III(C)-2].

Participate in the county’s “anti-littering campaign” and support any and all efforts to coordinate with the County on the removal of graffiti [III(I)-1].

Work with the Community Police Officer and Neighborhood Watch (NW) to identify areas for growth and activities to attract participants and new block captains [III(H)-1].

## **Police Protection**

Work with town staff, the Community Officer, Mt. Rainier police, PG County police and contract officers to identify the repeat offenders in Brentwood, characterize the types of crimes that they engage in, and establish their current status (e.g. incarcerated or paroled) [II(C)-1].

Town Administrator sign-up for VINE to track criminals who routinely conduct criminal activity in Brentwood, notifying residents and police when these individuals are released through the most effective means available [II(C)-2].

Work with the Town Administrator, Mayor and the Code Enforcement Officer to recommend addresses to JAG and provide detailed documentation. A strong partnership and sufficient information allows JAG to come into the community and act on problem residences and businesses III(G)-1.

Authorize an economic cost effectiveness study of the MOU officer and the contract officers when the MOU officer has been on duty for one year [IV(A)-1].

Investigate the criteria and pros and cons of an MOU with Prince Georges County.

Continue to increase the budget for public safety to accommodate 24/7 protection for Brentwood residents.

Work to identify a suite of public safety grants (including a schedule) that the town will apply for in FY 2008/2009 to augment and expand its public safety efforts.

### *Legislation to Improve Public Safety*

When revising the Codes use surrounding municipalities' and the county's codes as a model to strengthen Brentwood's codes, facilitating action against criminals and those individuals supporting criminal activity [II(D)-2].

Designate a council member and the Committee to work with Congressman Van Hollen's office to seek changes to state and county law to strengthen criminal prosecution of repeat offenders [III(C)-2].

## **Additional Actions to Improve Public Safety and Encourage Business Involvement**

Work with the Town Administrator, the Code Enforcement Officer, and representatives from PEPCO to develop a five-year plan to repair, replace, and strategically add lighting to Brentwood streets. Develop a budget to implement this plan and appropriate funds during the annual budget development to implement the lighting plan [V(A)-1].

Actively engage businesses in public safety, re-establish the business watch program and re-examine the licensing agreements for businesses in Brentwood.

## **Conclusion**

The Advisory Committee firmly believes that these recommendations, if fully implemented, will significantly increase public safety for Brentwood residents, build community and encourage development. These recommendations will require work and leadership from the Council, the Town Staff, and Community Volunteers. Without any one of these components the recommendations will not be fully implemented, nor their full benefit realized.

A final recommendation of this Advisory Committee is that the Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee continues to operate. The Advisory Committee will develop strategies to implement the recommendations, develop timelines, and assist in holding the Council accountable to those timelines. The Committee will help to implement of these initiatives.

We respectfully submit this report, with complete documentation, to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Brentwood, and to the residents of Brentwood. We ask that the Mayor and Council consider our recommendations thoughtfully, taking into account the full implications of crime and its effect on our town.

Finally, the Committee asks that the Council act swiftly, with professional consideration, to implement these recommendations, or such as the Council sees fit, to improve the safety and the quality of life for the residents of Brentwood.

## Introduction

In December of 2007 the Brentwood Town Council chartered the Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as Committee) in response to an increase in criminal activity and concerns expressed by the residents of Brentwood,. From February through April, the Committee, a diverse group of Brentwood residents, met with and interviewed the town's elected public officials, public safety officers, community outreach leaders, and Congressional representatives, including contract police, Mount Rainier Police, Park Police, and Prince George's (PG) County Police, Neighborhood Watch organizers, representatives from the Boys and Girls club, and Congressional staff. The objective of the Committee is to review the crime issues facing Brentwood and to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce the prevalence of crime in Brentwood and significantly increase public safety. Appendix A is a compilation of the weekly minutes of the Committee's meetings. A summary of their responses and recommendations from these interviews follows and the detailed minutes of these meetings are attached as appendices.

## II. Defining the problem: What are our crime problems?

### *A. What are the types of crime and where to they occur?*

The most common types of crime in Brentwood are drug trafficking, commercial and residential breaking and entering, petty theft, robbery, loitering, and stolen vehicles near Rhode Island Ave. Breaking and entering occurs mostly in homes during the day and businesses at night. Homes are rarely broken into at night unless it is clear that no one is on the premises or the criminal has intelligence that there are drugs or large sums of money is on the premises. The PG County police pay particular attention to assaults and breaking and entering as they will often occur in series of events. Often, the individuals who perpetrate the robberies, breaking and entering, or burglary do so to support their drug habit. Prostitution is another frequent crime in Brentwood, especially around Pennwood Rd. and Bunker Hill Rd. at the bus stop, and near the gas stations at Rhode Island Ave. and 38th, primarily to support the prostitutes' drug habits.

Brentwood is adjacent to several parks and residents often use the NW Branch Trail to commute to the West Hyattsville Metro. Most crimes within the park system are characterized as small crimes—robbery and petty theft with some sexual offenses.

The Hot Spots for crime in Brentwood are around Perry Street, Quincy St, 38<sup>th</sup> St and Rhode Island Ave (Figure 1). In those areas the crime is mostly drug related, predominantly Marijuana and crack. To date there is no PCP traffic in Brentwood.

The area around Brentwood Market (including Webster St.), the apartments near Bunker Hill, 4100 Penwood Ave, and 38<sup>th</sup> and Shepard are also areas for drug traffic. At times the north side of Brentwood is the target for robbery and breaking and entering, especially the dead end streets or streets that are near Mt. Rainier and parks that offer easy escape routes.

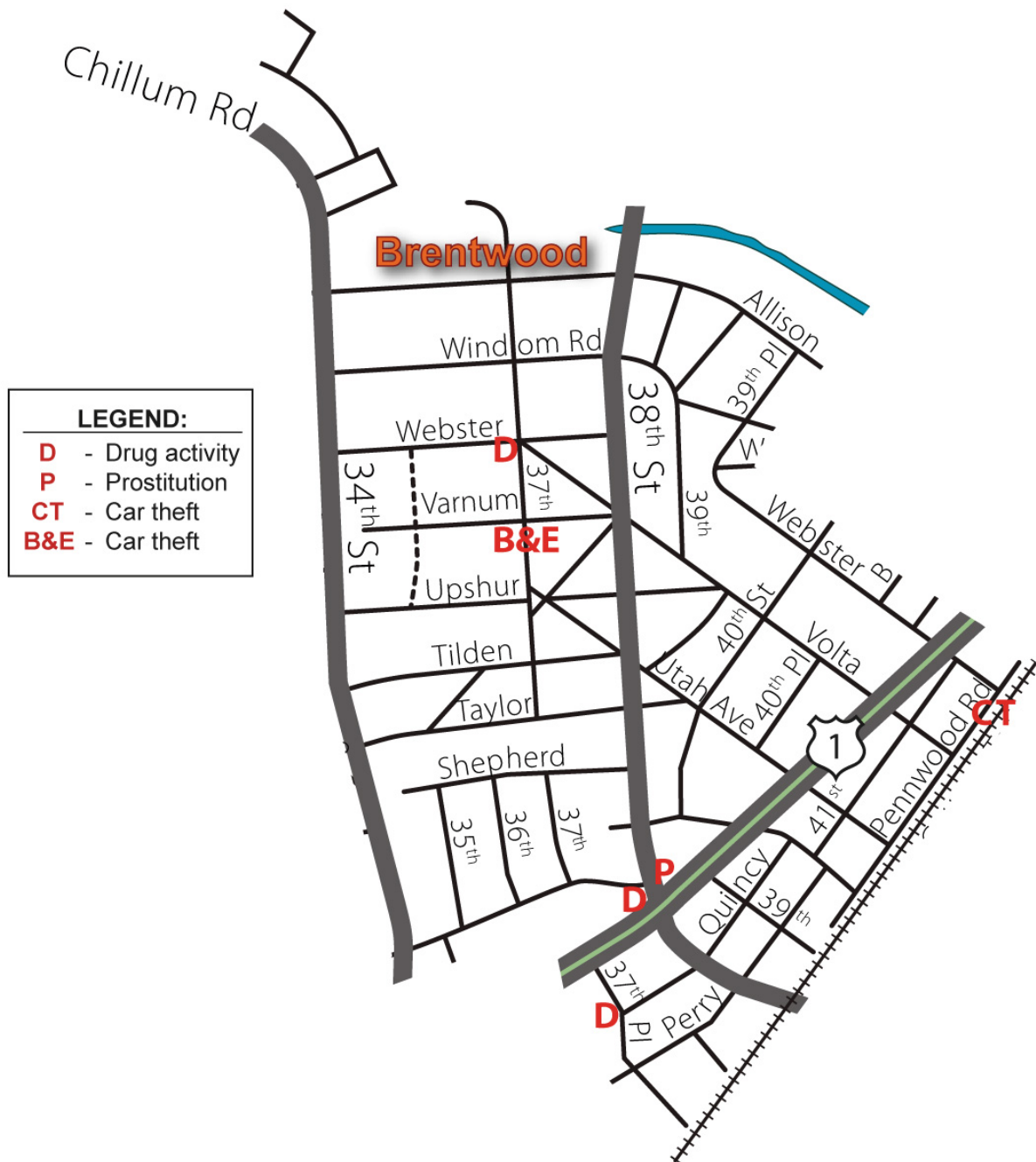


Figure 1. Map of Brentwood with Crime Hot Spots Delineated.

With regard to the area near the NW Branch bike path, the “Hot Spot” currently has been the area around the Queens Town Apartments and the West Hyattsville metro. Last year there were 6 armed robberies--3 behind the metro and three behind the Queens Town Apartments on the path that leads to Brentwood. To date this year there have been two armed robberies in this area. The suspect would often attack either from the ravine under the bridge on the bike path or from the wooded area adjacent to the path.

**Finding II(A)-1:** Special Assignment Teams (SAT) are assigned to an area based on the number of calls, leads, and documentation of activity provided by residents or patrol officers. For example, narcotics will come and do a round robin of the area every few weeks or a couple of times a month to sweep for drug activity. The narcotics SAT is looking for large amounts of drugs to make the biggest dent possible in the distribution stream.

**Recommendation II(A)-1:** The Council should inform and encourage residents on how to become actively involved in their safety documenting suspicious activity, documenting actions that might be associated with drug trafficking, and calling the police when such activity is spotted. Residents should be informed in using tip-lines (see discussion below) and encouraged to watch out for one another: know who is home during the day, and report anything that seems out of place or out of the ordinary. This information should be regularly posted on the cable channel, newsletter, and website.

### ***B. What are hot spots and how are they tracked?***

The definition of “Hot spots” is based on calls for assistance or responses (e.g. reported crime) that police receive from residents and on police arrests or citations made within a particular area. Each call is put through dispatch and logged and, depending on how the call is resolved, will determine if the information is included in the map. PG County provides maps that identify various types of crime that are reported to PG County Police. These maps are updated by the county every two weeks. The maps can be customized and broken down by town. Brentwood or the Committee can request the maps for our area.<sup>1</sup>

**Finding II(B)-1:** The PG County crime statistics maps are an effective way to target limited police protection, increase citizen awareness, and track effectiveness of enforcement actions.

**Recommendation II(B)-1:** Council should request that these maps be provided to the town on a monthly basis and that the maps be published on the town's website, posted in the Town Hall, provided to the contract police, and the Committee.

### ***C. Identify the repeat problems and offenders and take action to remove them from the community.***

A significant portion of the crime in Brentwood is perpetrated by a handful of individuals who are repeat offenders. For example: a dominant drug source in Brentwood is the Hare Family which includes Johnny Hare, his 3 brothers, and eight or so cousins. PG County police recognize these individuals as habitual drug dealers and often stops and checks them if they are sighted on the street.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Maps can be obtained by contacting Cpl. Curry at 301-699-2601.

<sup>2</sup> Personal Communication with Lt. Meterko see also:  
<http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/inquiry/inquirySearch.jis>



Jamie Matthew Hoffman has more than 50 prior court/action convictions dating back to 1984 involving theft, burglary, breaking and entering, and possession of narcotics.<sup>3</sup> His most recent conviction involved the assault of a police officer. Because of his propensity to break into homes and sheds in the Brentwood/Mt. Rainier area, police will check on his status when there is a spike in burglaries in the area.

These are just a few of the repeat offenders within Brentwood. Unfortunately, Maryland does not have a three strike rule and PG County's judicial system is fairly lenient. Judges do not consider the prior record of the accused or the individual during conviction and during sentencing. Judges often allow for the sentences of repeat offenders that involve multiple violations or parole violations to be served concurrently rather than consecutively. The parole system only requires that one-quarter of the sentence be served before a convicted criminal can be paroled.

One possible tool that Brentwood residents, the Council, police, and town staff can use to track repeat offenders is VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday)<sup>4</sup>. VINE is computer system that regularly receives court and custody information from Maryland criminal justice agencies.

VINE is an automated notification system that helps individuals exercise their rights as a crime victim. When individuals register for the VINE service, they receive a phone call to notify them of court dates related to their case, even if the State's Attorney's Office fails to do so. If there are any changes to their case, VINE will automatically call the individual's phone number. When the call is received from VINE, the individual enters a four-digit pin number. VINE will confirm that the individual has been notified and stop calling you. VINE can provide individuals with 24 hour access to information about their case. Individuals can call the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc. at 1-877-VICTIM-1 and ask for help with VINE or 1-866-MD4VINE and follow the prompts. Individuals can register the day they call using the name of their offender, the phone number at which they wish to receive phone calls, and a four-digit pin number to use for verification.

For the community as a whole, the most important aspect of VINE is that it also contacts individuals about the release, escape, or transfer of offenders. Individuals can call VINE any time--24 hours a day, 7 days a week--to check on the status of an offender. So if crime suddenly spikes, town staff could call VINE to determine if known repeat offenders have been released, or for the handful of repeat offenders the town staff or the community police officer could sign-up for the service. A more thorough description of the VINE program is available in Appendix B.

**Finding II(C)-1-4:** A considerable portion of crime in Brentwood is perpetuated by repeat offenders and stemming this trend will significantly reduce the criminal activity. The VINE system is an effective tool used to track these repeat offenders. The system will notify registered individuals when a criminal comes up for parole or is released. In short, it is the first line of defense to know the whereabouts of individuals who routinely prey on the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/inquiry/inquirySearch.js>

<sup>4</sup> [http://mdcrimevictims.org/\\_pages/a\\_avail\\_help/a6\\_help\\_vine.htm](http://mdcrimevictims.org/_pages/a_avail_help/a6_help_vine.htm)

**Recommendation:**

- The Council and town staff work with the Community Officer<sup>5</sup>, Mt. Rainier police, PG County police and contract officers to identify the repeat offenders in Brentwood, characterize the types of crimes that they engage in, and establish their current status (e.g. incarcerated or paroled) [II(C)-1].
- A Town representative and the Committee work with Congressman Van Hollen's office to seek changes to state and county laws to strengthen criminal prosecution of repeat offenders [II(C)-2].
- The Town Administrator sign-up for VINE to track the half dozen or so criminals who routinely conduct criminal activity in Brentwood; and when these individuals are released the police and residents are notified through either a website or listserv posting [II(C)-3].
- The Council hold a workshop where a representative from VINE and the MD Crime Victims' Compensation Program can come and address the residents and educate them about these two programs [II(C)-4].

***D. Where are the new emerging or potential problems?***

Gang violence is a growing issue in PG County, and while gangs do not seem to have a strong presence in Brentwood at this time, vigilance is necessary. MS 13 is one of the larger gangs in this area; however there are other Latino, white, and African-American gangs in PG County. Gangs are defined as an enterprise with the sole purpose of engaging in criminal activity—they are not a group of friends that merely “hangs out.” Gang members are proud of the membership in the gang. A growing concern is the girl gangs that now frequent Kenilworth and Bladensburg.

An indicator of an emerging gang problem is the amount of graffiti present. Gang graffiti has recently appeared in Brentwood; two gangs, the Little Brown Criminals (LBC and L3P) and the Queen's Town Gang (QTG) are vying for control of Brentwood. It is important that once the graffiti is found and reported, it be quickly removed by the maintenance staff. PG County maintains a very effective graffiti removal program. The Anti-graffiti unit is a team that works 3-4 times a month. During February and March of 2008 they removed 4,500 sq ft of graffiti. Lt. Decker of PG County, who started the program, will photograph the graffiti before and after, and then the team removes the graffiti. The team has successfully operated with donations of paint and graffiti removing chemicals from towns and businesses.

**Finding II(D)-1:** Brentwood residents should be informed of gang activity within the community so that they will cooperate with police to deter the establishment of gangs within our town. The PG County Gang Unit<sup>6</sup> will provide a presentation to residents about gangs. In their presentation they will give a definition of gangs, tell residents how to identify them (e.g football jersey, handkerchiefs, etc) and will tell residents what the graffiti means.

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<sup>5</sup> For future reference in this report, the Committee is defined as the current membership with the addition of the Community Police Officer.

<sup>6</sup> Sgt. Norris is the leader of the PG County gang unit (301) 699-2601.

**Recommendation II(D)-1:** Council schedule a workshop for the PG County Gang Unit to give a presentation about gangs to Brentwood residents and the Council.

According to some of the officers, the Town Ordinances or Codes should be revised to more closely reflect the codes of the surrounding communities and the county. For example, there is nothing in the code for the enforcement of expired tags, and there is no specific charge that allows the vehicle to be ticketed and towed.

**Finding II(D)-2:** In some cases Brentwood's Town Ordinances and Codes inhibit action on the part of neighboring, contract, or county police to take action on individuals who may be associated with criminal activity or in some way supporting this activity.

**Recommendation II(D)-2:** When revising the Codes, the Council use surrounding municipalities' and the county's codes to strengthen Brentwood's codes so that it facilitates action against criminals and those individuals supporting criminal activity.

### **III. Communication, Outreach and Community Initiatives**

#### ***A. Where does Brentwood fit into police protection in PG County and what is the process for a response to a call?***

Brentwood is located within the "Adam" sector of District 1, which is commanded by Lt. Matt Meterko. The Adam Sector includes Brentwood, North Brentwood, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Mt Rainier. Within District 1 there are 200 police patrolling District 1 including patrols, special teams, and detectives. Brentwood is located within Adam 1 (A-1) sector. The Adam-1 (A-1) sector includes 7 beats with one officer per beat (note: that is actually more than one officer because it includes 24/7 coverage). Police are deployed to respond to calls for assistance in the following manner: if there is a break-in within A-1, officers from both A-1 and A-2 respond. If there is a crime in another sector, command works to ensure that there is always police coverage in A-1 and police are not deployed for prolonged periods of time to other sectors. Increases in crime within a sector (designating it as a Hot Spot) does not necessarily affect the deployment of beat patrol officers. Instead command will deploy special teams or special assignment teams (SAT) to address these Hot Spots.

#### ***B. Call for action--What number should be called under what situation and what are the correct procedures and operations to ensure both a prompt response and a record of the incident?***

In instances where a criminal or suspicious activity involves a person, residents should call 911. If residents merely want the police to check out a suspicious or out of place occurrence they should call the non-emergency number 301-333-4000. If there is a violent crime in a distant sector, e.g. a shooting in Langley Park, cars will be pulled from our area (A-1 sector) to respond. If the response takes several hours, the commander "clears the board" of all non-emergency calls that are several hours old. That means non-emergency calls may not be responded to unless the caller is persistent.

In addition, residents or community groups can call: 301-669-2950 to leave messages about general info, tips, information on drug transactions, etc.

There have been occasions where Brentwood calls for response are bounced between Mt. Rainier and PG County, but PG County does respond to everything within the county. The PG dispatch merely dispatches cars and does not know if Cpl Kenworthy or our contract officers are on duty. The most effective process is to call PG County dispatch. If Cpl Kenworthy is on duty he will get and respond to the call. If he is not then the PG County police will respond. If our contract officers are on duty then they will respond. All calls go through the same call center.

The take home point from the discussions with various police officers was clear: "the most important point is whenever there is a problem or suspicious activity, call the police—do not assume someone else will. If you hear gun shots or a person is involved call 911. ***Be persistent, be aware, watch out for your neighbors, and call the police if there is a problem.***

**Finding III(B)-1:** The most vital piece of information for residents is knowing which number to call in an emergency or to alert the police of suspicious activity. Those numbers should be readily available and the information and procedures clearly spelled-out in terms that all residents can understand.

**Recommendation III(B)-1:** Council work with its Community Police Officer to reproduce the refrigerator magnets with the appropriate phone numbers to contact police in an emergency and report suspicious activity. The Council should also consider a public safety pamphlet explaining the importance of reporting crime and the procedures to do so. Both the magnet and the pamphlet should be in English and Spanish.

### ***C. What is the best way to communicate crime prevention issues to residents?***

Outreach and education of residents about public safety is critical. The Committee discussed the importance of community outreach to residents and in particular outreach to the Hispanic community. It is important that these efforts begin by ascertaining how individuals view public safety and their perception of the problem. The Committee also noted that building a strong sense of community is important and furthers public safety—if we know our neighbors we are more likely to become involved in creating a safe community.

**Finding III(C)-1-4:** Very few Brentwood residents are actively involved in public safety activities. The diversity of the community may create an artificial barrier in terms of language and age. Outreach should begin at the level of the individual and work to build both understanding and community.

**Recommendation:**

- The Council work with the Committee to develop and conduct a survey of residents regarding public safety perceptions and to gather information on criminal activity and emerging hotspots (e.g do they feel safe, what are the

phone numbers to call for police assistance). A group would be developed to go door-to-door to ask residents to participate in the public safety survey. Those conducting the survey could leave information on how to call the police to report suspicious activity and how to start a neighborhood watch. The group could also schedule home safety assessments (see recommendation below) [III(C)-1].

- To promote community development with events in the park, e.g. “screen on the green.” With summer coming a screen on the green program could be a good way to build community spirit and increase awareness about public safety. Information could be distributed prior to the movie to promote public safety and the costs could be offset by local groups sponsoring the refreshments for that evening [III(C)-2].
- Use the town’s newsletter, website, and cable channel to broadcast information increasing awareness about actions to improve public safety. Advertise the availability of publications including pamphlets, magnets, and home security check lists [III(C)-3].
- Organize and broadly publicize workshops to train senior residents, inform individuals about gang activities, and make victims of crime aware of resources available to them through VINE [III(C)-4].

**Finding III(C)-5:** Home assessments or home safety surveys are one of the most effective ways that residents can work with police to effectively secure their home and deter home intrusions or break-ins. PG County police, Brentwood’s contract officers, and the Community Police Officer can survey a house and tell the owner what areas are vulnerable or are points of entry for a break-in. Home assessments/surveys are the easiest means to reduce the likelihood of a criminal breaking into your home.

**Recommendation III(C)-5:** The Council should inform and encourage citizens to sign-up for home assessments/surveys and specifically designate days when the community police officer would be available to conduct a home inspection/survey. In particular, senior citizens should be brought together and training provided to help them become less vulnerable to crime and to know what actions to take to protect themselves. The Council should work with the Committee to develop both a survey check list and safety brochure that could be left behind.

Because senior citizens are particularly vulnerable and in some cases unable to attend workshops and training sessions, the Community Police Officer should make home visits to senior citizens to conduct safety assessments, home surveys, and inform them about the proper protocols to report crime or suspicious activity. An added benefit would be to have Fire Department volunteers also accompany the Community Police Officer to inspect the house for fire safety issues.

#### ***D. Public safety listening sessions or chat with the Chief/Police.***

On at least one occasion the town has sponsored a “chat with the chief” event at town hall. While it was well attended, the Committee’s public safety listening session sparked little interest. Nevertheless, Cpl Kenworthy, and Officers Cruz, Dube, and Martinez demonstrated a

willingness to meet and listen to residents concerns. These sessions give residents the chance to get to know their public safety officials and build a relationship with them.

**Finding III(D)-1:** It is important for residents to get to know and feel like they can approach our public safety officials. Frequent dialogue will help to develop these relationships.

**Recommendation III(D)-1:** At least every other month the Council dedicate some time or a workshop to discuss public safety issues with Brentwood's MOU and contract officers. The discussions should be mediated to provide everyone with the opportunity to express their views.

### ***E. Regular meetings on crime at various locations and other meetings with community safety groups***

During the Committee's discussions several police officers suggested the formation of a community response team, whose members would participate in PG County's Citizens Advisory Council. The Community Response Team would work with District 1 team supervisor. Sgt. Ricky Davis. In turn representatives from the Community Response Team could participate in the Citizen Advisory Council, which is comprised of community leaders who meet once a month in Hyattsville to discuss District 1 issues. The Committee or the Town should gather more information on this council and determine if Brentwood is represented.

**Finding III(E)-1:** One of the goals of the Community Response Team is to engage in property crime prevention with the goal of reducing this crime by 50%. The Community Response Team offers residents actions that it can take to help the community reach this overall goal.

**Recommendation III(E)-1:** The Committee recommends that the Council invite Sgt. Ricky Davis to a Council Workshop to brief residents about the program. The Committee, once it has more information from this workshop could devise a plan to possibly establish a Community Response Team in Brentwood.

Sgt Duellely suggested that Brentwood participate in the county's "anti-littering campaign." Illegal dumping and litter is a significant problem for the Anacostia watershed. Recently, Brentwood had a dumping incident on Rhode Island Ave. where materials were dumped from a construction site. The materials were from the renovation of a funeral home in DC. The violator was charged with dumping, but had not yet been given a summons. It cost the county \$2,700.00 to remove 50 tons of debris. This is a violation of the laws related to commercial dumping--over 500lb is 5 years in prison and/or a \$30,000 fine. Cpl. Watkins is the contact point for the anti-litter campaign.

### ***F. Crime blog: What crimes have happened where, when, and by whom?***

Cpl. Kenworthy provides information and emails summarizing his patrol activities to the Mayor, Town Administrator, and PG Detectives (e.g. Det. Holland, Robbery Division), and the Chief of police for Mount Rainier. Cpl. Kenworthy shares information with these individuals and monitors

the Brentwood listserv for information about possible crime issues or suspicious activities that he will pursue when he is on duty. In Mt. Rainier Chief Scott maintains his own blog<sup>7</sup> and routinely sends updates to residents about crime within Mt. Rainier. This has the benefit of keeping residents informed about crime in their community and in particular spikes in criminal activity that may jeopardize their safety.

The Committee agreed that it is important to track the occurrence and trends in crime and have reliable crime statistics published and available to Brentwood residents. Currently, the Gazette publishes crime statistics and as stated earlier the county does produce maps from weekly “call sheets” and crime statistics recorded for Brentwood.

**Finding III(F)-1-2:** Providing crime statistics will create greater awareness and alert the community when there is an increase in crime or suspicious activity in a particular neighborhood within Brentwood. Information on crime should be readily available to residents.

**Recommendation:**

- Crime statistics for Brentwood be published in the monthly newsletter and that Cpl. Kenworthy continue to write a “crime or public safety corner” to the newsletter, addressing safety issues, providing tips, and highlighting areas of concern [III(F)-1].
- The Council consider including a crime blog on its website similar to Chief Scott’s and devote a portion of its website to educating residents about crime, the resources available, and how to report crime [III(F)-2].

## ***G. Increase participation in JAG***

Joint Action Group (JAG) is an effective tool to address both business and residential houses suspected of housing criminal activity. JAG includes representatives from the State’s Attorney, Public Works, DER, HUD, Child Protective Services, Animal Control and Federal States Attorney. Cpl. Lisa Garland is the contact. The program sends letters to nuisance homes and businesses then follows up aggressively. These letters are based on persistent code violations provided by the Mayor and Town Code Enforcement Officers. After the letter is sent the JAG team comes to those addresses using the code violations to legally gain entry. JAG has proven very successful in PG County, closing businesses that operate illegally, protecting children who are being abused, and disrupting drug sales. The program rotates through the six districts every few weeks to act on these various code violations. JAG can condemn houses, enforce housing codes, or otherwise act to investigate problem/suspicious houses through code violations. JAG will keep a location on their list until the issue is resolved. Any concerned citizen can contact JAG by reporting on a property to Sgt. Duelly

**Finding III(G)-1:** Properties that incur habitual code violations can be indicators of criminal activity. Cleaning up these problem areas will deter criminal elements from doing business in Brentwood. Further, having outside support from JAG will enable the town to address persistent problems with businesses/homes with numerous code violations.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://mrpdchief.blogspot.com/>

**Recommendation III(G)-1:** The Town Administrator, Mayor and the Code Enforcement Officer should work closely with JAG, to provide detailed documentation, establish a strong partnership, and facilitate JAG coming into the community to act on problem residences and businesses.

## ***H. What is the Role of Neighborhood Watch***

Neighborhood Watch (NW) began in Brentwood in response to the residents' concerns about crime "hot spots" in the area of Perry and Quincy streets. Residents were concerned generally about the safety of the neighborhood's children, and more specifically about cars speeding through Perry Street, noise, littering, drugs, guns, public drinking, and general chronic issues of crime. Initially NW was a forum for citizens to vent their concerns, and to gather information about common concerns but then it evolved into a more formalized approach to address crime and build community trust. In August or September of 2006, NW began to meet bi-monthly, hold events such as dog walks to patrol the neighborhood, meet neighbors, and hand out safety information; and attend council meetings to gather information from and share information with the town. Cpl. Victor Kenworthy, helped NW map hot spots, shared safety tips, and updated residents on the status of issues of concern. Since the neighborhood deals with issues that are cross-border it has grown into the Mt. Rainier/Brentwood Neighborhood Watch.

Lately, NW watch has set up training at the Brentwood Town Hall, where residents outside the Perry/Quincy street neighborhood are encourage to get information and to set up their own NW. Tina Fulp has become involved in the area near Town Hall, and Sonia Lopez has set up meetings in the Allison Street Area. Each neighborhood can elect a block captain (such as these), who can organize meetings and serve as a point of contact with the police. In general, driving patterns, foot traffic, and natural landscape define how a particular neighborhood can be delineated and mapped for purposes of a NW.

Neighborhood Watches have come and gone in the past, for NW to remain effective, healthy and vital there must be the commitment of residents and positive outreach and fun activities to attract new participants. In particular, NW needs close coordination and support from the community policing officer for training and information. More block captains are needed to grow NW in Brentwood and greater participation is needed to sustain it. Residents must "own" the NW as it is only as good as the members make it.

**Finding III(H)-1:** NW is an effective community policing tool. It is an important component of any public safety effort—building community and supplementing neighborhood vigilance.

**Recommendation III(H)-1:** Council, the Committee, and NW work with the Community Police Officer to develop a plan to expand and strengthen NW in Brentwood and identify areas for growth and activities to attract participants and new block captains.

## ***I. Community initiatives that can help reduce crime--"Take It Off" - programs to remove graffiti and the anti-litter campaign***

The benefits of the County's Anti-graffiti Unit were discussed above. This program has been highly effective and one that Brentwood should support. In the meantime, it is important for the town's maintenance staff to respond quickly to remove any graffiti within the town to further



deter the influx of gang activity. If they are not already doing so, photographs should be taken before removal.

**Finding III(I)-1:** Graffiti is a signal of gang activity and illegal dumping is another form of criminal activity that costs the town precious resources and injures our environment.

**Recommendation III(I)-1:** Brentwood participate in the county's "anti-littering campaign" and support any and all efforts to coordinate with the County on the removal of graffiti.

## **IV. Increasing Police Protection and Funding Public Safety**

### ***A. What do we want to achieve and what will it cost?***

After completing our review for the first section of this report, it was clear to the Committee that **a 24 hour/ 7day a week police presence is needed** to increase public safety for Brentwood's residents and to attract anchor businesses. The prospect of receiving increased police protection from PG County is virtually non-existent. The Council could direct more funding toward contract police, but no additional county resources will be forthcoming.

The current fiscal climate is dim and public safety resources are stretched thin. When crime increases in Brentwood an increased police presence is achieved through predominantly special assignment teams and some increases in patrol; however, this is a temporary and reactive solution. So the Committee and the Council need to investigate other avenues to increase public safety.

The Committee discussed with several of the police representatives the pros and cons of a merged police force similar to the merger that occurred with the fire fighting resources. On its face, the pooling of these community resources makes perfect sense; however, questions of implementation quickly arise:

1. For established police forces with chiefs and other ranked officers, how are these ranks reconciled in a merged police force?
2. How would the cost be divided?
3. What assurance would there be that each participating town be covered fairly?

The Committee did not have the benefit of reviewing any documentation on previous discussions that Council members may have had on this topic. Clearly, if the Council wants to seriously consider this option, it will take considerable time and a dedicated effort to work out a strategy and implementation plan to achieve a collective police force.

The MOU allows for one dedicated police officer, and Brentwood has seven contract police officers from Prince Georges County. These officers have been effective in reducing crime in Brentwood and working with the Mayor and the Committee. The Committee did not have the data to evaluate which of the two approaches—MOU versus contract officers—are most effective in responding to and deterring crime in Brentwood.

It may be advisable to use only contract officers, or to use the MOU in a different capacity such as supervising the contract officers, including maintaining the schedule and establishing performance standards. When the MOU officer has been in place for a year there should be an

analysis of the performance of the contract officers and the MOU officer. This analysis should examine the records of arrests, citations, and code enforcements, among other information. The analysis would be the basis of an economic study to ensure the Town receives optimal benefits from the Brentwood police protection.

**Findings IV(A)-1:** There will soon be enough data to make an informed assessment of the police coverage in Brentwood and decisions on the most cost effective mechanism to ensure and possibly expand future police protection.

**Recommendation IV(A)-1:** The Council authorize an economic study of the MOU officer and the contract officers when the MOU officer has been on duty for one year.

Brentwood entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Mt. Rainier to provide Brentwood with a dedicated police officer to serve our town and improve public safety. Brentwood is not in a financial position to hire a police officer and provide all of the resources needed such as dispatch services, insurance and office space. Our officer who is responsible for police coverage of Brentwood, is supervised by the Mt. Rainier Police Chief, and is dispatched to service calls through the Mt. Rainier call service. As of June 2008, the Brentwood has paid the City of Mt. Rainier \$76,589 (4 quarterly payments of \$19,147.25). Additional expenditures were \$5,644.86 for quarterly lease/purchase payments for the police vehicle (\$1,881.62 x 3; a fourth payment is due); \$1,616.49 for office supplies, vehicle tires and the purchase/installation of a lightbar for the police car; and \$299 for phone services (rear room of the Council office). Therefore, the Y-T-D total is \$84,149.35.

The MOU with Mt. Rainier does not expressly provide that our officer give priority to Brentwood service. He still covers Mt. Rainier assisting with calls in their town when needed. It was not until recently that Mt. Rainier police have covered parts of Brentwood, and they still do not answer calls in Brentwood when our officer is not on duty.

When Brentwood residents call the Mt. Rainier dispatch they are referred to PG County if our officer is not on duty – which, at forty hours a week means our dedicated officer is on duty less than 25% of the time. Residents then have to make an additional call to PG County Police. For non-emergency calls this process becomes laborious and confusing, calling into question the benefits of the additional coverage by an officer dedicated to Brentwood.

Because the officer is supervised by Mt. Rainier's chief, he can be pulled away from his duties in Brentwood for discussions with police management. The Committee believes that Brentwood would benefit from a consistent police presence within town limits, with the officer spending the majority of his time here, only checking in periodically at Mt. Rainier.

The Committee did not have the opportunity to investigate the pros and cons of transferring the MOU to PG County or if that was even a viable option. Perhaps a PG County officer could more effectively share information directly with the PG County Police regarding hot spots and the rhythm of the criminal activity in the town. The officer would have direct access to SAT squads and other resources that the county offers. The residents of Brentwood could perhaps have expanded and more consistent coverage, and any confusion as to who to call for non-emergency calls for service would be potentially eliminated.

**Recommendation: IV(A)-2** The Council task the Committee with investigating the criteria and pros and cons of establishing an MOU with PG County.

## ***B. Summary Of Current Public Safety Budgets And Grants***

The police services budget for FY 2006-2007, FY 2007-2008, and the proposed budget for FY 2008-2009 are summarized in table 1.

<b>POLICE SERVICES:</b>	<b>FY 2007-08</b>	<b>FY 2008-09</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Police Officer (incl all)	76,589	49,945
Benefits	-	16,482
Uniforms/Equipment	-	1,500
Training	-	1,000
Admin. Expenses	-	2,500
Vehicle Lease	-	8,000
Vehicle Markings/Equip.	-	11,389
Gas, Maintenance, Equip.	-	8,500
<b>Total Mt. Rainier MOU Police Services:</b>	<b>\$ 76,589</b>	<b>\$ 99,316</b>
<b>P.G. County Contract Police Services:</b>		
Contract Officers (incl all)	113,411	74,824
State Aid for Police	-	10,660
Injured Worker's Compensation	-	5,000
Contract Police Supplies		200
<b>Total P.G. County Contract Police Serv.</b>	<b>\$ 113,411</b>	<b>\$ 90,684</b>
<b>TOTAL POLICE SERVICES:</b>	<b>\$ 190,000</b>	<b>\$ 190,000</b>

The budget has been relatively stagnant over the last several years and represents the bare minimum necessary to obtain approximately 80 to 100 of hours of police coverage per week out of 168 hours in a week. If the goal is to have 24/7 police protection for Brentwood's residents it is likely that this number would have to nearly double.

The Committee reviewed the public safety budgets and the various grants. In 2007, Brentwood received a Liveable Communities Grant for \$90,000 used to hire a community police officer. The new grant for \$70,000 for FY08/09 is a shared community policing grant with Mt. Rainier. Of the \$70,000, a total of \$50,770 goes to Mount Rainier with the remainder of \$19,230 left for Brentwood. This grant does not appear in the Proposed Budget for FY 2008-09 since it is not "revenue" coming into the Town, but is a grant earmarked for a "community officer" to undertake community policing efforts with residents and businesses and is not included in the Public Safety line item.

The Committee discussed another source of financial support for public safety which is a State aid program for police protection. In 2007, Maryland state police provided quarterly payments with the total amount Brentwood received being \$10,000. The application for these funds is not

competitive but must be applied for on an annual basis. The Committee recommends that the Council continue to apply for this grant and expressed willingness to work with the Town Administrator to get additional information on this program so that it can be used in developing the FY08/09 budget.

**Finding:** The budget has been flatline the last two years.

**Recommendation: IV (B)-1** Continue to increase the budget for public safety to accommodate 24/7 protection for Brentwood residents.

### ***C. Identification of County, State, and Federal grants to secure additional police protection***

County, State, and Federal grants provide opportunities to supplement police protection and augment public safety efforts. The Committee undertook a review of grants available for Public Safety. Based on the Committee's research of Public Safety Grants in Maryland several search vehicles showed promise as sources for future grant research and the submission of applications. In addition, during the Committee's research most grants listed encouraged applicants to work with community and faith based organizations. Through our research we found several community organizations located in the Brentwood area that were recipients of public safety grants. There are more than eleven public safety grants awarded within Mt. Rainer and Brentwood, MD. (See Appendix C).

**Finding:** Several public safety grants encourage cooperation with businesses and the faith community. With the new community police office in place the Committee suggests that the Council introduction and forum with some of the faith and community and faith based organizations.

**Recommendation: IV(C)-1** The Council should have a workshop to bring together community based organizations and Brentwood residents to develop a public safety plan, identify grant support, and strengthen, educate and take back our community from crime.

The Committee found the following grant search vehicles:

- [www.djs.state.md.us](http://www.djs.state.md.us)
- [www.chiefsupply.com](http://www.chiefsupply.com) (EMS, law enforcement, fire rescue, and all other public safety agencies and departments are eligible and encouraged to use CHIEF Grants public safety grant consulting service).
- <http://www.mdredbookonline.com/>--The Red Book Online is a database of financial and non-financial assistance offered by Maryland State government agencies. The Maryland Department of Planning maintains the database and each sponsoring agency provides updated information. The Redbook Online has more than 800 programs providing financial assistance and technical services to governmental entities, civic and private organizations, and individuals.

This year, Governor Martin O'Malley signed legislation to improve public safety throughout MD and establish regional partnerships with Baltimore City and Prince George's County to reduce gun violence, crime and gang-related activity. The Committee found the following grants to

support public safety from the Maryland Governors Office of Crime Prevention and Control Grants and Programs (<http://www.goccp.org/grants/grants-programs.php>)

- **Strengthening Youth Mentoring through Community Partnerships**--The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, this program provides grants to fund programs to “Strengthen Youth Mentoring through Community Partnerships.
- **Latino Youth Mentoring Program**--The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDD), provides grants to fund, under the OJJDP FY 2008 Latino Youth Mentoring Program, to assist communities with a school-based strategy to prevent delinquency, gang membership, and gang violence.
- **OJJDD Gang Prevention Coordination Assistance Program**--The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, provides grants to localities with existing anti-gang strategies to enhance coordination of Federal, state, and local anti-gang resources. The grant funding is available to support salary and related expenses for coordinators with responsibility for organizing and overseeing anti-gang activities including prevention and enforcement efforts
- **Weed and Seed Communities Competitive Program**--The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Community Capacity Development Office (CCDO) provides grants to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity. The Weed and Seed initiative comprises a community-based, comprehensive multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and neighborhood restoration. It is designed for communities with persistent high levels of serious violent crime and corresponding social problems to apply for grants to develop and enact strategies to reduce this problem.

**Finding:** Public safety grants can be a source of additional funds to promote and expand public safety efforts.

**Recommendation: IV (C)-1** The Council and the Committee will work to identify a suite of public safety grants (including a schedule) that the town will apply for in FY 2008/2009 to augment and expand its public safety efforts.

## **V. Safety issues and Business Involvement.**

### ***A. Lighting Plan--NINA***

The Town Administrator, Code Enforcement Officer, and the Council have taken significant steps to develop a plan to repair, replace, or add lighting in several areas in Brentwood. While the Committee has not reviewed this plan, delays in implementation discussed at Council meetings, and concerns expressed by residents indicate that more should be done. Adding new lights to streets that are now poorly lit will require a long-term plan that accommodates increased lighting into the budget over time.

**Finding V(A)-1:** Adequate lighting on the streets of Brentwood is a fundamental action to increase safety for the town's residents and deter crime.

**Recommendation V(A)-1:** The Committee work with the Town Administrator, the Code Enforcement Officer, and representatives from PEPCO to develop a five-year plan to repair, replace, and strategically add lighting to Brentwood streets. A budget should be developed to implement this plan and funds appropriated during the annual budget development to implement the lighting plan.

## ***B. Business Strategy***

Brentwood needs strong anchor businesses that contribute to public safety and the growth of the community. In the past, there was an active business watch program, but it has since languished. The community police officer brings new opportunities to reinstate the business watch program and work toward revising the business license agreement to eliminate derelict businesses or those that may be contributing to crime.

**Finding V(B)-1:** Businesses in Brentwood should contribute to economic growth and public safety.

**Recommendation V(B)-1:** Actively engage businesses in public safety, re-establish the business watch program and re-examine the licensing agreements for businesses in Brentwood.

## ***C. Other Actions Directed at Businesses***

Some businesses in the town are a mecca for criminal activity. For example, the Sunoco and the Lowest Price gas stations are particular problems as they ignore and in some cases facilitate the open-air drug trade in Brentwood. The pay phones at the Sunoco are primarily used in that drug trade. The Committee discussed two actions. First, the Town Council should work with Verizon to either remove the pay phones or relocate them to the fire house where police officers can station themselves to observe their use. Second, JAG can act on these commercial properties to clean up violations.

## **VI. Conclusion.**

The Brentwood Anti-crime Advisory Committee undertook an extensive interview and research process to identify crime hot spots, clarify procedures to contacting the police, communicate with and mobilize citizen to participate in their own safety. Our report presents nearly 30 recommendations. These recommendations are just the beginning. The council's implementation of these recommendations is vital to the safety and well-being of Brentwood's residents and continued community growth. The ***Committee strongly recommends that the Council work with the Committee to implement this strategy and to facilitate the Committee's continued research into other public safety issues identified in this report. The Committee would recommend scheduling a monthly meeting to track the progress of the plan's implementation and to address other public safety issues that arise.***

**APPENDIX A**  
**MINUTES OF THE BRENTWOOD**  
**ANTI-CRIME ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **February 4, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, Shawn Cassatt and Peter Jones

Guests: Councilmember Rudder

The Committee reviewed the charter for the Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee. Given the small size of the Committee, the members agreed to function without a chair, and work to share the responsibilities among all members. The Committee acknowledged that there is a substantial amount of work that must be done over the 90 day span of its charter. The Committee planned to meet weekly and keep the duration of its meetings short—7:30 PM to 9:00 PM.

The Committee reviewed those provisions of the charter related to “Defining the problem: What are our crime problems?” The Committee acknowledged that over the course of their discussions they would highlight the following:

- The sporadic reporting of crime. Many residents are unsure which phone number they should call to report criminal activity and the process they should use on days when Cpl. Kenworthy is on duty versus those when he is off duty. An improved process to report crime must be developed and communicated to Brentwood residents.
- There are particular areas in Brentwood that are hubs of crime—Quincy St., Lowest Price gas station, and Brentwood market, among others. These areas need extra vigilance and a strategy to address the particular crime associated with those areas.
- Brentwood is plagued by individuals who routinely use the community as their site for operation. These individuals, referred to as repeat offenders, are released from jail, only to return to Brentwood to resume their burglary or drug dealing. The Committee agrees that it should work with police to address this problem and make the community aware of the presence of these individuals.

The Committee identified key law enforcement officers to invite to its meetings to address the committee and to provide background and information that would be useful to our efforts. The Committee will draft questions that can be provided to these officials prior to the meeting. The Committee members will contact and schedule meetings with: Cpl. Kenworthy, Major Davis, Chief Scott, and Lt. Meterko.

Adjourned at 9:05 pm.



# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **February 14, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, Shawn Cassatt and Peter Jones

Guests: Ron Bretemp, Mayor Schmiedigen

The Committee discussed the importance of tracking crime and having reliable crime statistics published and available to Brentwood residents. Currently, the Gazette publishes crime statistics. Statistics for Brentwood come from calls for service for possible criminal or suspicious activity. Prince George's county maintains the weekly "call sheets" and crime statistics for Brentwood. In addition, Cpl. Kenworthy has a log of all of his activities: calls that he responded to, and citations issued.

The Committee agreed that the crime statistics for Brentwood should be published in the monthly newsletter. Also, Cpl. Kenworthy's contribution to the newsletter is extremely helpful and should continue. He can address safety issues, provide tips, and highlight areas of concern. Providing crime statistics will create greater awareness and alert the community when there is an increase in crime or suspicious activity in particular a neighborhood within Brentwood. It was also note that Chief Scott of Mt. Rainier has a blog which provides detailed information of police activity on a weekly basis. Brentwood should consider having a similar blog on its website and devoting a portion of its website to educating residents about crime, the resources available, and how to report crime.

The Committee noted that there is often a direct relationship between the condition or upkeep of a house and suspicious activity. In future meetings, the Committee will look into ways to support Brentwood code enforcement efforts.

The Committee noted information indicating increased criminal activity near the park and the Brentwood Maintenance Administration building. The Committee noted the importance of establishing a relationship with Park Police. The Committee will invite a representative from the Park Police to discuss issues of manpower, joint-enforcement, and criminal activity/hotspots in the parks in or near Brentwood.

The Committee discussed the importance of community outreach to residents. Three possible actions to create awareness about public safety were identified:  
Conduct a public safety survey of residents. A group would be developed to go door-to-door to ask residents to participate in a public safety survey. Those conducting the survey could leave information on how to call the police to report suspicious activity and how to start a neighborhood watch.

Outing in the park—screen on the green. With summer coming a screen on the green program could be a good way to build community spirit and increase awareness about public safety.

Publicize the neighborhood watch and Cpl. Kenworthy's security walk through. This could be done at special events held in the park or in conjunction with Council meetings.

The Committee noted that through this process, a clear course of action as to what someone should do when they observe a crime—what number should they call and what should they report and request (e.g. request to be seen). This information should ultimately be provided to residents in English and Spanish via the website, newsletter, refrigerator magnet, and flyers.

The Committee discussed the obstacles to crime prevention and reduction inherent in the court system in PG County. Unlike Montgomery County, PG County does not have a three-strike rule. Some offenders have records dating back more than 20 years with at least 50 prior convictions, yet they serve the minimum time on their sentence and receive early parole. County Council Member Campos and other State and Federal representative should be encouraged to enact stricter sentencing for offenders, especially repeat offenders.

The Committee reviewed the questions developed for law enforcement officials. Laura offered to revise the questions, group them by theme, and prioritize them.

The Committee discussed possible questions for Neighborhood Watch. The Committee will develop those questions at its next meeting and identify a representative that can be invited to attend one of the Committee meetings.

Adjourned at 9:15 pm.

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **February 29, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, and Peter Jones

Guests: Jeff Clark, Tina Fulp, Cpl. Kenworthy, Cpl. Dube, and Tracey Rembert

#### Revisions to and adoption of Agenda

The Committee agreed to shorten the agenda to adapt to time constraints.

#### Review of Participation Policies for Guests

Document reviewed and adopted by consensus with revisions (attached).

#### Discussion of minutes from previous minutes

There were no questions regarding the minutes from the meeting on February 21. Nina agreed to provide minutes for the two meetings prior.

#### Review of Status of Process

- The Committee discussed the tabulation and reporting of the results of the interviews. It was suggested that notes be taken from each interview, and compiled when the interviews are completed.
- Laura will contact Julius of Van Hollen's office, thanking him for visiting the meeting on Feb. 21, inviting him to a meeting, and asking for earmark paperwork
- Nina will contact Nichelle Schoultz of Mikulski office to get forms for earmarks and to invite her to attend one of our meetings.
- Reviewed a brief report of current police force expenditures. Agreed that the report was incomplete. Barbara will work with Peter to get a complete and accurate report for the Committee to review. It was commented that any earmark request should be a similar amount that would be used to increase the Brentwood police force/protection.
  - Greater information is needed on the annual budget for Cpl. Kenworthy as a full-time employee for Brentwood.
  - Costs should be broken out separately for Cpl. Kenworthy and PG County Police.
  - Any additional detail regarding insurance, training, and other related costs should be provided.

Officer Dube briefly attended the meeting, and provided information on the VINE System. Training is available for individuals along with free information to foster community involvement. Residents can register in the system to receive information on a person of concern coming out of jail. The citizen will receive a call when the person of concern is up for parole hearings or released from prison. Brentwood may request a presentation or training, possibly before a council meeting. Nina will get more information.

- Cpl. Dube also mentioned the use of a Vehicle message board which can flash with any message that will support anti-crime efforts. Xzavier will contact Cpl. Steve Allen, 301-699-2950 or [soallen@copg.gov](mailto:soallen@copg.gov) for details and potential purposes.
- The Committee was reminded of meetings with Major Davis with residents the last Wednesday of every month, 6:30 pm at District 1 Commander's office. The meetings are open to allow for discussions on crime and to meet the Commander.
- Cpl. Dube reported on an initiative called JAG (Joint Agency Group). The Group includes representatives from the State's Attorney, Public Works, DER, Animal Control and Federal States Attorney. Cpl. Lisa Garland is the contact. The program sends letters to nuisance homes and businesses then follows up aggressively. The area JAG is next targeting is Cool Spring, and may be able to target Brentwood in April, May, or June. Four to five houses must be identified to start the process.
  - The next meeting of JAG is March 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - Mayor must provide the documentation to DER and invite JAG in to assist the town's efforts.
  - Documentation is more effective if it includes code enforcement violations.

#### The Calendar

The Committee scheduled regular meetings for Thursdays at 7:30 pm, to be changed to accommodate invited guests' schedules. The Committee continues to schedule interviews with police officials, politicians, and community groups. The following is the proposed schedule:

March 6—NW Watch preparation and finalization of questions for NW  
 March 10—Try to schedule Chief Scott (Nina)  
 March 20—Lt. Meterko (Laura)  
 March 27—Jerry Brownlee (Park Police) Xzavier, Neighborhood Watch representative (Nina)  
 April 3 or 10th—Major Davis (Barbara)  
 April 10 or 17th—Van Hollen (Laura)  
 April 24—work date—report and writing assignments  
 April 15---Listening Session about crime 6:30-7:15 pm

Task force agreed there should be a week's notice of change in the meeting schedule.

#### Scheduling of Neighborhood Watch

It was agreed that Pam Strother would be the most helpful representative of the Neighborhood Watch to inform the Committee. Nina will contact her.

Adjourned at 8:57 pm

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **March 10, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, and Shawn Cassatt

#### **Discussion with Capt. Capt. Stoots (Mount Rainier Police Department), Cpl. Kenworthy, and Officer Cruz--Summary of response to questions on crime**

##### **Characterization of Crime**

##### **1. *How do you (or your organization) define "Hot Spots?"***

The definition of "Hot spots" are based on calls for assistance or response (e.g. reported crime), PG County police statistics, officer generated calls, and citizen complaints. There is an archival system to define "hot spots" that goes back 5 years. Capt. Stoots reviewed the management hierarchy—Brentwood lies within District 1 and is part of Adam-1 beat. This beat includes the neighboring towns of Brentwood, North Brentwood, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Mt Rainier.

PG County does have a website where crime statistics are available. However, because Mount Rainier has a police department, the information on the website will not include Mount Rainier's statistics. The website will include Brentwood crime statistics.

Calls for service are emailed or dispatched from District 1. If Cpl. Kenworthy is on duty, he will respond to the call for Brentwood. Cpl. Kenworthy provides information and emails summarizing his patrol activities. He sends these emails to the Mayor, Town Administrator, and PG Detectives (e.g. Det. Holland—robbery), and the Chief of police for Mount Rainier. Cpl. Kenworthy shares information with these individuals and monitors the Brentwood listserv for information about possible crime issues or suspicious activities that he will pursue when he is on duty.

##### **2. *Where are the hotspots for crime in Brentwood?***

Capt. Stoots stated that the Hot Spots for crime in Brentwood are around Perry St, Quincy St, 38<sup>th</sup> St and Rhode Island Ave, the area around Brentwood Market, and apartments near Bunker Hill, and 4100 Penwood Ave. At times the north side of Brentwood is the target for robbery and breaking and entering. The south side of Brentwood around Quincy and Perry Streets is the area associated mostly with drug traffic. Overall Brentwood does not have a lot of calls for service.

For persistent problem areas or hot spots, Cpl Kenworthy, Mount Rainier police, and PG County police will send SAT teams.

##### **3. *How do you characterize the types of crime in Brentwood?***

Capt. Stoots characterize the types of crime in Brentwood as drug traffic, loitering, and burglary. Prostitution is another frequent crime in Brentwood, especially around Bunker Hill Rd, at the bus station and near the gas stations. The number of prostitutes has

decreased to some extent. The women engage in prostitution primarily to support their drug habits.

**4. *What are the issues you see facing Brentwood?***

According to Capt. Stoots, the Town Ordinances or Codes should be revised. For example, there is nothing in the code for the enforcement of expired tags—there is no specific charge that allows the vehicle to be ticketed and towed. Brentwood should consider revising its code to mirror that of Mount Rainier’s code. Capt. Stoots stated that gangs are present via neighborhood crews, especially near Queenstown, associated with MS 13; however, the presence is not extensive.

**Who are the Criminals and Where are They?**

**5. *Who are our repeat offenders and how can we track their activities (e.g. when they are in prison and when they come out)?*** Capt. Stoots stated that there are just a handful of repeat offenders, they are: Jamie Hoffman, Walter Wright, Robert (Robin) Tolson, and Coleman. The VINE system is the most effective way to track these offenders.

**6. *What areas in Brentwood are most vulnerable to crime and what actions can be taken by the community to reduce the risk of criminal activity in those areas?***

Capt. Stoots had no suggestions or responses for this question.

**7. *How can Brentwood increase PG County police protection and presence?***

Capt. Stoots suggested that the Committee pose this question to Major Davis.

**Processes & Procedures**

**8. *What is the most effective procedure for contacting the police (including phone numbers)?***

The most effect process is to call PG County dispatch. If Cpl Kenworthy is on duty he will get and respond to the call. If he is not on duty the PG County police will respond. If Officers Cruz or Dube are on duty, they will respond. All calls go through the same call center.

According to Capt. Stoots, the most important point is whenever there is a problem or suspicious activity, call the police—do not assume someone else will. If you hear gun shots or a person is involved call 911. Be persistent and call the police.

**9. *When no officers paid by Brentwood are on duty and criminal activity occurs at the same time as a crime in Mt. Rainier, how is it handled?***

See response to question 1 above.

**10. *How can we improve our relationships with law enforcement (especially PG County) to make them more responsive to chronic crime issues?***

Capt. Stoots stated that it is important to be persistent and continually look for ways to work productively with the police.

**11. *How can we support our prosecuting attorneys so that repeat offenders are prosecuted to the full extent of the law?***

Capt. Stoots said that it is important that residents remain involved and to be their own advocates if they have been the subject of a crime. He suggested that residents stay on

top of their case and show interest. Many police and prosecuting attorneys are frustrated with the court system and the lack of support at the levels of the legislature to make improvement that would establish more deterrents in the criminal justice system.

**12. How can we work together with businesses to enforce code violations and encourage long-term compliance with town and county codes?**

Capt. Stoots suggested that the town modify its code to strengthen the business provisions and to establish codes that are a deterrent to shady or marginal businesses. JAG is an effective tool to address both business and residential housing code violations. Brentwood has been scheduled for a JAG action this spring.

**13. Can you suggest programs or tips and advice targeted to protect our senior citizens?**

Capt. Stoots suggested that senior citizens should be brought together and training provided to help them be less vulnerable to crime and to know what actions to take to protect themselves. It was also noted that it is important that neighbors make an effort to know who is home during the day and to work with police so that they have that information. So, if there is a crime the police have a group of individuals with whom they can work to solve the crime.

***Integrated Municipal/County Efforts***

**14. What are the prospects for a joint “Port Town” law enforcement effort?**

Capt. Stoots had no response for this question.

**15. What can we do to provide a communal communications system for the different officers protecting Brentwood (e.g. Brentwood Officer through Mt. Rainier’s police force, contract police, PG County police)?**

Likewise this question was not discussed.

**16. How can we secure additional county resources to tackle problems related to drugs and prostitution?**

With regard to the house on Quincy Street, Capt. Stoots stated that it is very difficult for agents or police to enter the house. While undercover narcotics officers frequent the area, it will require a warrant to enter the house. The individuals that conduct drug transactions from that house are part of a closed circle of people who know each other and will only sell to their “regular customers.” Someone must vouch for you in order to buy drugs. Also the area does not lend itself to easy surveillance. Nevertheless, enforcement officers will continue to work to break up the drug trafficking circles in Brentwood.

**17. How can we incorporate Park Police and Metro Police into our efforts?**

This question was not discussed.

Adjourned 9:00 pm

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **March 11, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Shawn Cassatt, Nina Young, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Xzavier Wright  
Guest: Pamela Strother

Ms. Strother spoke to the committee about the background, purpose, and functioning of the Neighborhood Watch (NW). She explained that the NW initially started on Perry and Quincy streets on an ad hoc basis in response to the residents' concerns about crime "hot spots" in the area. Issues of greatest concern were: cars speeding through Perry Street, noise, littering, drugs, guns, public drinking, and general chronic issues of crime. Of particular concern to the residents was how these issues affected the safety of the neighborhood's children.

In the beginning, the meeting served as a forum for citizens to vent their concerns, and to gather information about common concerns. Soon, the residents decided to create a more formalized approach to address crime and build community trust and bonding by creating the NW. Starting in August or September of 2006, the NW began to meet bi-monthly. The group worked to address crime concerns; host dog walks to patrol the neighborhood, meet neighbors, and hand out safety information; and attend council meetings to gather information from and share information with the town. The group decided against having one specific leader, and instead encourages all residents to become involved and share responsibility.

The meetings are often attended by Cpl. Victor Kenworthy, who helped residents map hot spots, shared safety tips, and updated residents on the status of issues of concern. Since the neighborhood deals with issues that cross the borders of Mt. Rainier and Brentwood, residents from both towns attend, and the NW decided to be called the Mt. Rainier/Brentwood Neighborhood Watch.

The NW watch has set up training at the Brentwood Town Hall, where residents outside the Perry/Quincy street neighborhood can get information about setting up their own NW. Tina Fulp has become involved in the area near Town Hall, and Sonia Lopez has set up meetings in the Allison Street Area. In general, driving patterns, foot traffic, and natural landscape will help define how a particular neighborhood can be defined and mapped for purposes of a NW. Each neighborhood can elect a block captain, who can organize meetings and serve as a point of contact with the police.

Neighborhood Watches have come and gone in the past, and Ms. Strothers emphasized the need for organization, commitment, positive outreach, and fun activities to maintain a healthy, vital, and effective NW. In particular, the group need regular help from the community policing officer for training and information – but the wide range of feelings about police is a reality that cannot be ignored. Some residents – particularly minority residents – are sometimes uncomfortable dealing with the police or town council. Another issue is that some people have unrealistic expectations regarding the scope and nature of what a NW can do.

Ms. Strother suggested optimism in overcoming the above mentioned issues, and also gave other recommendations for improving NW. She stated that NW could use more block captains and better participation – at the very minimum residents should commit to attending monthly



meetings. Residents must “own” the NW – the NW watch is only as good as the members make it. Finally, NW works well when there is not one large organization spanning the whole town, but rather many smaller NW that work together.

Adjourn            9:15

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **March 20, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, and Shawn Cassatt

#### **Discussion with Lt. Matt Meterko--Summary of response to questions on crime**

##### **Characterization of Crime**

##### **1. *How do you (or your organization) define "Hot Spots?"***

The definition of "Hot spots" is based on calls for assistance or responses (e.g. reported crime) that PG County police receive from residents and on police arrests or citations made within a particular area. Lt. Meterko provided maps that identified various types of crime that are reported to PG County Police, these maps are updated by the county every two weeks and could be sent to the town to be either published in the newsletter or made available to interested citizens.

Lt. Meterko reviewed the available resources in District 1 which are as follows:

- 200 police patrol District 1 including patrols, special teams, and detectives.
- Brentwood is located within the "Adam" sector of District 1 which Lt Meterko commands. The Adam Sector includes Brentwood, North Brentwood, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Mt Rainier.
- Brentwood is located within Adam 1 (A-1) sector
- The Adam sector includes 7 beats with one officer/per beat (note that is actually more than one officer because it includes 24/7 coverage)

Lt. Meterko reviewed with the Committee how police are deployed to respond to a call for assistance. For example, if there is a break-in within A-1, officers from both A-1 and A-2 respond. Nevertheless, Lt. Meterko, does work to ensure that there is always police coverage in A-1 and police are not deployed for prolonged periods of time to other sectors. Lt. Meterko stated that Hot Spots (as defined by the county) do not necessarily affect the deployment of beat officers, instead he will deploy special teams or special assignment teams to address these Hot Spots.

Hot Spots within our immediate area are:

- Langley Park for citizen robberies and auto theft; and
- Colmar Manor and Cottage City for burglary

**2. *Where are the hotspots for crime in Brentwood?***

According to Lt. Meterko, the Hot Spots for crime in Brentwood are around Perry St, Quincy St, 38<sup>th</sup> St and Rhode Island Ave (refer to maps). In those areas the crime is mostly drug related and the drug transactions are predominantly Marijuana and crack—to date there is no PCP traffic in Brentwood. A dominant drug source in Brentwood is the Hare Family which includes Johnny Hare, his 3 brothers, and eight or so cousins. PG County police recognize these individuals as habitual drug dealers and often stop and check them if they are sighted on the street.

**3. *How do you characterize the types of crime in Brentwood?***

Lt. Meterko would characterize the types of crime in Brentwood as drug traffic, commercial and residential breaking and entering, petty theft, and stolen vehicles near Rhode Island Ave. The scenario for the breaking and entering are home are the dominant targets during the day, with businesses being the target at night. Homes are rarely broken into at night unless it is clear that no one is on the premises or the criminal knows exactly what they want such as drugs and money. The PG County in particular pays attention to assaults and breaking and entering as they will often occur in groups of events. Lt. Meterko, like other officers who have spoken to the Committee, emphasized the importance of having a home inspection. He and specifically Greg Taylor on his staff can inspect a house and tell the owner what area are vulnerable to or points of entry for a break in. Again, Lt. Meterko said that home assessments are the easiest means to reduce the likelihood of a criminal breaking into your home.

**4. *What are the issues you see facing Brentwood?***

Lt. Meterko stated that gang violence is an issue in PG County, but not so much for Brentwood at this time. The gangs are mostly Hispanic and frequently mostly Langely Park and Kenilworth. According to Lt. Meterko, gangs are an enterprise with the sole purpose of engaging in criminal activity—they are not a group of friends that merely “hangs out.” Gang members are proud of the membership in the gang. A growing concern is the girl gangs that now frequent Kenilworth and Bladensburg. The graffiti that has recently appeared in Brentwood is not a problem and can be easily addressed with a removal program that PG County maintains. When graffiti is sighted, Lt. Meterko recommends sending him an email with the location and he will dispatch a group to remove the graffiti.

**Who are the Criminals and Where are They?**

**5. *Who are our repeat offenders and how can we track their activities (e.g. when they are in prison and when they come out)?***

Lt. Meterko stated that one individual known to frequent Brentwood is a criminal by the name of Quesenbury (?) who was arrested in Brentwood for 40lbs of marijuana, and sentenced to 10 years. However, Lt. Meterko did not know if he had been paroled and was again in circulation.

**6. *What areas in Brentwood are most vulnerable to crime and what actions can be taken by the community to reduce the risk of criminal activity in those areas?***

Lt. Meterko had no suggestions or responses for this question.

**7. *How can Brentwood increase PG County police protection and presence?***

***Lt. Meterko recommended that Brentwood continue to secure contract officers to provide police protection.*** In his opinion we have good officers and they seem to be helping Brentwood respond to crime. He noted that the county does not allow rookies to provide contract services. He further noted that as particular crime events increase, the county will assign “wild cards” and SAT Teams.

## **Processes & Procedures**

### **8. *What is the most effective procedure for contacting the police (including phone numbers)?***

Lt. Meterko recommended that in instances where something is going on that minute or involves a person, residents should call 911. If residents want the police to check something out then, again call 911. If residents observe suspicious activity they can also send an email to Lt. Meterko. For non-emergencies, response time may be longer. For example if there is a shooting in Langley Park, cars will be pulled from our area to respond. If the non-emergencies are on the board for several hours, he “clears the board of all prior calls for non-emergency response”.

### **9. *When no officers paid by Brentwood are on duty and criminal activity occurs at the same time as a crime in Mt. Rainier, how is it handled?***

See response above.

### **10. *How can we improve our relationships with law enforcement (especially PG County) to make them more responsive to chronic crime issues?***

Lt. Meterko acknowledged that Brentwood calls are bounced sometimes between Mt. Rainier and PG County. But PG County does respond to everything within the county. The dispatch merely dispatches cars and does not know if Cpl Kenworthy or our contract officers are on duty. In his opinion, there are really only two numbers that should be published in the Brentwood newsletter, they are 911 and the non-emergency number of 301-333-4000. He recommended that we drop the Mt. Rainier station number.

### **11. *How can we support our prosecuting attorneys so that repeat offenders are prosecuted to the full extent of the law?***

This question was not discussed.

### **12. *How can we work together with businesses to enforce code violations and encourage long-term compliance with town and county codes?***

The Sunoco and the Lowest Price gas stations are particular problems and contribute to the drug trade in Brentwood. The pay phones are primarily used in that drug trade. The Committee discussed two actions. First, it might be worthwhile for the Town Council to work with Verizon to either remove the pay phones or relocate them to the fire house where police officers can station themselves to observe their use. Second, JAG can act on commercial properties to address problems. JAG has proven very successful: it rotates through the six districts every few weeks to act on Code violations provided to it by the various towns—Brentwood is on the schedule.

### **13. *Can you suggest programs or tips and advice targeted to protect our senior citizens?***

Again, as recommended earlier, Lt. Meterko reinforced that the best action seniors can take is to have a home inspection.

### ***Integrated Municipal/County Efforts***

#### ***14. What are the prospects for a joint “Port Town” law enforcement effort?***

Lt. Meterko thought that pooling law enforcement resources, on its face, is probably a good thing. But it is questionable whether in practice it will work. One of the potential obstacles would be, for those municipalities that already have police forces with chiefs, who would be the chief of the new “Port Town” police force?

#### ***15. What can we do to provide a communal communications system for the different officers protecting Brentwood (e.g. Brentwood Officer through Mt. Rainier’s police force, contract police, PG County police)?***

Lt. Meterko stated that the county is working on a system that will allow all of the municipalities within PG County to freely communicate with one another.

#### ***16. How can we secure additional county resources to tackle problems related to drugs and prostitution?***

Again, Lt. Meterko suggested that Brentwood work with the JAG and the SAT teams. Narcotics will come and do a round robin of the area every few weeks or a couple of times a month. Narcotics is looking for large amounts of drugs to make the biggest dent possible in the distribution stream. JAG gains entry to ed problem/suspicious houses or businesses through code violations. They will keep an addresss on their list until the issue is resolved.

Finally, Lt. Meterko suggested that Brentwood look into partnering with Explorer Police—a program targeting outreach to young people. He suggested having someone from the program come and talk to the Committee.

#### ***17. How can we incorporate Park Police and Metro Police into our efforts?***

Lt. Meterko informed the Committee that the Hyattsville metro police, Park Police, PG County are teaming together to tackle crime on park property. In his opinion the Park Police resources are stretched thin with only 3-4 police officers for this district. PG County can and does patrol the parks, and can use its resources of K-9 units and helicopters to respond to crime in the parks. The Committee informed Lt. Meterko that there appears to be MS 13 gang members who hang out and watch folks play basketball in the park. Hyattsville does have a gang unit and Metro police are increasing their gang related effort with regard to metro transit operations. There has been some gang activity on the bike paths near Brentwood. If gang activity or graffiti is observed he suggested that we send him an email and he will inform the gang SAT or dispatch the graffiti removal team.

### **ACTION ITEMS and POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. The Committee should either request or establish a practice where the Town is periodically sent a blow up of A-1 showing Brentwood crime statistics.**
- 2. Schedule periodic beat meetings in Brentwood Town Hall. Beat meetings consist of the 5 A-1 beat officers and the detectives. Cpl Kenworthy and our contract officers could also attend to discuss crime issues specific to Brentwood.**

- 3. Invite the Explorer Police to give a presentation either to the Committee or to the citizens of Brentwood.**
- 4. The Committee could work with the town to come up with a list of addresses for home assessments.**

Adjourned      9:20 pm

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **March 27, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, and Shawn Cassatt

#### **Discussion with Chief Larry Brownlee, Capt Scott Dau (field operations), Capt Ronald Pierce (investigations)--Summary of Response to Questions on Crime**

The Committee provided the Park Police with the following questions in advance of the meeting:

1. How can we incorporate Park Police and Metro Police into our efforts?
2. What role can the Park and Metro Police play in providing police protection. How can residents help the Park and Metro Police in their efforts in the Brentwood area?
3. What are your department areas of concern for crime in Brentwood; and how do you patrol those areas?

The Park Police provided the Committee with maps showing locations of crimes on the bike/walking paths (NW Branch) near Brentwood as well as tables with crime statistics over the past several years (attached).

The Park Police handle all crime within PG County Parks except unattended deaths. In those situations they work with the PG County police to investigate these deaths, but the county takes the lead role on homicides. Crimes within the park system are characterized as small crimes—robbery and petty theft with some sexual offenses.

The Park Police employ 107 officers and 27 civilians. The Park Police also have volunteers—to assist park police in their enforcement efforts. The Park Police provided the Committee with a copy of the PG County Park Rules and Regulations. They emphasized that a lot of crime happens after dark and the rules for parks haven't changed—the parks close at dark simply because at that time they are not the safest place to be.

#### ***Brentwood Hot Spot for Crime—Response to Question 4-- What are your department areas of concern for crime in Brentwood; and how do you patrol those areas?***

The "Hot Spot" currently has been the area around the Queens Town Apts. and the West Hyattsville metro. Last year there were 6 armed robberies--3 behind metro and three behind the Queens Town Apartments on the path that leads to Brentwood. To date this year there have been two armed robberies in this area. The suspect would often attack either from the ravine under the bridge on the bike path or from the wooded area adjacent to the path. Therefore, the Park Police increased their patrols of this area (added one officer in the area in the evening and an additional patrol during rush hour), put up fences to hinder criminals from initiating an attack from the woods, and plan to add lighting on the paths in the near future. The Park Police stated that there is no pattern regarding who the criminals target on the bike path except the individuals are mostly on foot and usually by themselves. They can't say the robbers are acting alone as they are committing these robberies during daylight in plain view of apartments. However, most of the crime occurs between 10 at night and 2 in the morning. The Park Police are taking this issue very seriously as it views six robberies to be very high for that particular area. Nevertheless, to put things into perspective, the Park Police did note that last year in the surrounding area-outside the park—there were 62 robberies over a three week period. Capt

Dau stated that since the summer of 2005, they have a detail of bike patrol officers, mounted patrols, and K-9 units that work the five hours around every evening rush hour.

### ***Gang Activity***

The Park Police did say that MS 13 will hold meetings in the park. They will collect their weekly dues and meet during the weekend. Some Committee members believe that the basketball court on Rhode Island Ave near Melrose may be a site or hang out for gangs. The Park Police have an officer that is assigned to the gang unit. The Park Police stated that they will send in their gang unit to investigate and sweep for gang tattoos. The basketball court has joint jurisdiction between the county, Hyattsville, and the Park Police. In the past it hasn't been considered a hot spot and the police have not received a lot of calls for those areas, but they will follow-up and pull the statistics.

### ***Citizen Involvement—Response to Question 3--How can citizens help the Park and Metro Police in their efforts in the Brentwood area?***

If residents observe any suspicious activity in the park system, call either the Park Police or 911. Residents could also call the county as the county will share the information with all police and townships in that area. If suspicious activity or incidents of crime persists, the Park Police will either send in a TAC unit or undercover officers. The Park Police will work with other law enforcement bodies to come up with a plan of action to resolve the problem. If problem persists then the Park Police will declare it a hot spot and spend increased time and resources until it is resolved. The Park Police reiterated that residents should call when they see something. The Park Police are responsible for 23,000 acres and given the limited resources, they can't be everywhere all the time--don't hesitate to call. The Park Police have "Operation Care" which is part of their community policing program. They are happy to provide more information to the town. Recently a new director—Ronny Gathers—has assumed the reins at Parks and Planning.

### ***Partnerships—Response to Question 2***

The Park Police stated that they work in close cooperation with Metro Police and they have partnerships with PG County, Mount Rainier, and Hyattsville Police. Through these partnerships with metro transportation, they are currently in discussions to establish a bus route that would allow commuters to use buses instead of the trails. The Park Police could establish a partnership with Brentwood's contract officers. Together they could put together patrols to cover the problem area of the NW Branch. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) also want to assist the Park Police with the armed robberies (specifically those with guns).

The Park Police is now working with the management of Queenstown Apartments to install a camera on the apartment building facing the trail. The Park Police have a camera with a line of sight of a half mile that can be deployed on hot spots—and specifically on this trail. The Park Police also have other cameras stationed at hot spots and community centers that can be monitored in real time.

The Park Police and other police forces engage in a cooperative local area investigation network where all of the patrol officers bring open cases to discuss and look for similarities and clues that will help them solve these cases. Brentwood contract officers could participate in this effort.

Since in all parks the Park Police have concurrent jurisdiction with other municipalities where parks are located, the PG County Police are putting in place a digital communication system that will allow all officers to communicate with one another.



Tactical units do occasionally conduct sweeps of the park and take pictures of suspects. The Park Police maintains photos of confirmed criminals and possible suspects. That book is available for viewing, but because some of these individuals are either juveniles or merely suspects the Park Police cannot release the photos to the Committee for further distribution.

### ***Juvenile Programs***

The Committee asked the Park Police if they had police programs for juveniles. The officers stated that they have a very successful program: COPS camp for kids. This is a 1 week camp that takes place in June and July. It has openings for 40 children (ages 8 to 13) each week. The COPS camp helps to develop respect, integrity, and partnerships. Information on the camp can be found either in the Park and Planning guide or through the PG County Parks smart link on the parks website. The Park Police would like to develop an Explorers program for Park Police.

### ***Crime Analysis and Mapping (Capt Pierce)***

Overall the PG County Parks are some of the safest in this country. In all of the park lands, the numbers for major crimes is low. The major problem is petty theft (petty property crime), which is on the increase. The PG County parks have experienced a 12% drop every year in violent crimes within the park system and the Park Police want to continue to improve safety within the parks and to deter crime.

Adjourn            8:59 pm

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **April 3, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Nina Young, and Shawn Cassatt

Guests: Pam Strother, Tracey Rembert, and Cpl Dube

#### **Discussion with Sgt Duelley (appearing in place of Major Davis)--Summary of response to questions on crime**

##### **Characterization of Crime**

**1. *How do you (or your organization) define "Hot Spots?"***

Sgt. Duelley stated that crime mapping is the best way to characterize hot spots. The mapping information is based on calls received by the PG County Police. Each call is put through dispatch and logged. Depending on how a call is resolved will determine if the information is included in the map. The maps can be customized and broken down by town. Brentwood or the Committee could request the maps for our area by contacting Cpl. Curry at (301) 699-2601.

**2. *Where are the hotspots for crime in Brentwood?***

Sgt. Duelley currently does not have the maps to identify the hot spots or characterize the type of crime.

**3. *How do you characterize the types of crime in Brentwood?***

See response to question 2.

**4. *What are the issues you see facing Brentwood?***

Gangs are a prevalent problem in PG County, but Sgt. Duelley is not sure how much gang activity there is in Brentwood. For example the stabbing at Park Vale High School was gang related. Brentwood can tell if we are having an emerging problem based on how much graffiti is present. Sgt. Duelley said that MS 13 is one of the larger gangs in this area; however there are other Latino, white, and African-American gangs in PG County.

Sgt. Norris is the leader of the PG County gang unit (301) 699-2601. Sgt. Duelley recommended the Committee contact him and have him provide a presentation about gangs either to the Committee or to Brentwood residents. In his presentation he will give a definition of gangs, how to identify them (e.g. football jersey, handkerchiefs, etc) and will tell you what the graffiti means (e.g. the name slink is everywhere).

As far as graffiti, Sgt. Duelley suggests that you have the public works crew remove it immediately. Otherwise there is an Anti-graffiti unit that was started by Lt. Decker that will come photograph the graffiti before and after, and remove the graffiti. The team works 3-4 times a month and during February and March removed 4,500 sq ft of graffiti. The team has been very successful. It operates using donations of paint and graffiti removing chemicals from towns and businesses. Community groups in Riverdale have donated 20 gallons of paint and other groups have donated removal chemicals.

### **Who are the Criminals and Where are They?**

**5. *Who are our repeat offenders and how can we track their activities (e.g. when they are in prison and when they come out)?***

According to Sgt. Duelley that information would be based either on parole and probation information—which he was not sure how to access—or for sex offenders, the Maryland state sex offender registry.

**6. *What areas in Brentwood are most vulnerable to crime and what actions can be taken by the community to reduce the risk of criminal activity in those areas?***

Sgt. Duelley recommended that residents and neighbors should really look out for each other—if you see something out of place in your neighborhood report it to the police. If it is drug activity PG County will collect the information and send in a SAT team.

**7. *How can Brentwood increase PG County police protection and presence?***

Sgt. Duelley said he doesn't believe that Brentwood is less protected, but the facts are police react to an increase in crimes and hot spots. Weekends are the busiest times and there is little time for preventative patrols, only time to respond to calls. A lot of effort has been focused on Langley Park. Nevertheless, Sgt. Duelley recommends that community groups gather information on suspicious activity and provide that information to him so that PG County police can act on it and send a TAC group.

He encourages communication with the police about crime or safety issues and also encourages residents to call the non-emergency number (301) 333-4000--about suspicious activity. Finally, he suggests that we make the most of our contract officers.

### **Processes & Procedures**

**8. *What is the most effective procedure for contacting the police (including phone numbers)?***

Sgt. Duelley suggested that residents or community groups can call: (301) 669-2950 to leave messages about general info, tips and non-traditional information. He also encouraged the use of JAG and recommended calling the non-emergency (301) 333-4000 for information or tips on drug transactions.

**9. *When no officers paid by Brentwood are on duty and criminal activity occurs at the same time as a crime in Mt. Rainier, how is it handled?***

Mount Rainier Police have their own police department whose primary responsibility is to Mount Rainier. PG County will assist Mt. Rainier police but currently they do not use the same communication system. PG County is installing an 80 million dollar radio system that will allow PG County police and Mt. Rainier police to talk to one another—the system is expected in a few months. Nevertheless, if a crime takes place in Brentwood, Mount Rainier and DC police are notified in case the suspect attempts to flee.

**10. *How can we improve our relationships with law enforcement (especially PG County) to make them more responsive to chronic crime issues?***

Sgt. Duelley suggested the formation of a community response team, whose members would participate in the county's Residents Advisory Council. The Citizen Advisory Council is comprised of community leaders who meet once a month in Hyattsville to

discuss District 1 issues. The Committee or the Town should gather more information on this council and try to determine if Brentwood is represented.

Sgt Duellley also suggested that Brentwood participate in the county's "anti-littering campaign." Illegal dumping and litter is a significant problem for the Anacostia watershed. Recently, Brentwood had a dumping incident on Rhode Island Ave. where materials were dumped from construction site. The materials were from the renovation of a funeral home in DC. The violator was charged with dumping, but has not yet been given summons. It costs the county \$2,700.00 to remove 50 tons of debris. This is a violation of the laws related to commercial dumping--over 500lb is 5 years in prison and/or a \$30,000 fine. Cpl Watkins is the contact point for the anti-litter campaign.

**11. How can we support our prosecuting attorneys so that repeat offenders are prosecuted to the full extent of the law?**

Sgt. Duellley did not have a suggestion.

**12. How can we work together with businesses to enforce code violations and encourage long-term compliance with town and county codes?**

Sgt. Duellley clarified that town codes enforcement must be done by the town; however, PG County Police are willing to enforce county violations if the violations are forwarded and processed through the proper channels.

**13. Can you suggest programs or tips and advice targeted to protect our senior citizens?**

Sgt. Duellley suggested contacting Officer Otiz Watkins who has programs specifically targeted to Senior Citizens.

**Integrated Municipal/County Efforts**

**14. What are the prospects for a joint "Port Town" law enforcement effort?**

Sgt Duellley doesn't have any information, but he did raise the concern that it may be difficult to select a chief from among all of the existing chiefs.

**15. What can we do to provide a communal communications system for the different officers protecting Brentwood (e.g. Brentwood Officer through Mt. Rainier's police force, contract police, PG County police)?**

Sgt Duellley suggested that the Committee work to set up an email tree to foster the communication of information to our contract police officers. Sgt. Duellley is more than willing to touch base with residents groups, but he cannot come on a weekly basis. He meets with the residents of Riverdale Hts. on a fairly regular basis. His preference is to set up a situation where he can contact 1 or 2 people who would then be responsible for distributing information. Sgt. Duellley can be reached at: [cwduellley@co.pg.md.us](mailto:cwduellley@co.pg.md.us)

**16. How can we secure additional county resources to tackle problems related to drugs and prostitution?**

Sgt Duellley recommends that residents communicate with the police and work to secure a SAT team.

**17. How can we incorporate Park Police and Metro Police into our efforts?**

Sgt Duelley suggested that we open lines of communication with Park and Metro Police.

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **April 10, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Laura Rogers, Shawn Cassatt, Barbara House, and Nina Young

Guest: Officer Martinez

The Committee reviewed and adopted the agenda.

The first order of business was the preparation and development of the format for the Listening Session.

The Committee agreed that participants would be requested to sign in to speak and the moderator would go through the list of potential speakers in order of arrival. The Committee agreed that Laura Rogers would moderate the session and provide the initial introduction and conclusion for the session. Shawn and Barbara volunteered to be the time keepers. The Committee agreed that each participant would be given three minutes to express his or her views. Nina would take notes during the session and Xzavier would summarize the discussion at the conclusion of the session and respond to the comments made by the participants.

The Committee discussed briefly the minutes circulated by Nina from the various officers. The Committee members agreed to review those minutes and provide editorial comments before the next meeting. The Committee also agreed that the minutes could serve as the basis to identify recommendations for the report and in reviewing the minutes Committee members would identify possible recommendations and note those for future discussion by the Committee.

The Committee conducted an initial review of the public safety budgets for 2007 and potentially for 2008. The Committee reviewed the status of the Liveable Communities Grant, the 2007 grant for \$90,000 has been expended as of June 20, 2007. The new grant for \$70,000 for FY08/09 is a shared community policing grant with Mt. Rainier. Of the \$70,000, a total of \$50,770 goes to Mount Rainier with the remainder of \$19,230 left for Brentwood community policing efforts with residents and businesses.

The Committee discussed another source of financial support for public safety which is a State aid program for police protection. In 2007, MD state police provided quarterly payments for a total of \$10,000. The application for these funds is not competitive but must be applied for on an annual basis. The Committee recommended that the Council continue to apply for this grant and expressed its willingness to work with the Town Administrator to get additional information on this program so that it can be used in developing the FY08/09 budget.

The Committee then discussed preparations for the meeting with Congressman Van Hollen. Laura reported that to date a time and place for the meeting had not been scheduled, but she is in contact with his office to schedule the meeting and will inform members as soon as she has information. The Committee members agreed that they they would brief the Congressman about the charter of the Committee, the findings from the interviews conducted to date, the challenges the community faces in securing police protection, and the need for federal and state support to expand the town's current police force.

The Committee reviewed the schedule for the remainder of April and May and agreed to the following:

- April—24<sup>th</sup> Work session for report, discussion of outline and writing assignments, further review of the budgets for FY07/08 and FY08/09
- May 1—Presentation from or interview with representatives from the Boys and Girls Club and the PG County Explorer Program
- May 8—Writing session and review of rough drafts of the report and recommendations
- May 15<sup>th</sup>—Review of draft final of the report, discussion of process to finalize report and provide the report to the Council. Also discussion of draft presentation to Council.

Adjourn            8:45

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **April 17, 2008**

### **Minutes**

**Present: Laura Rogers, Shawn Cassatt, Barbara House, Xzavier Wright, and Nina Young**

Xzavier and Nina provided the Committee with a report of their meeting with Congressman Van Hollen which took place in his office in Washington DC on April 17, 2008 at 1:15 pm. Present at the meeting was Xzavier Wright, Nina Young, Congressman Van Hollen, and Julius (the Congressman's staff person).

Xzavier and Nina briefed the Congressman about the charter of the Committee, the findings from the interviews conducted to date, including characterization of crime in Brentwood, the challenges the community faces in securing police protection, the need for federal and state support to expand the town's current police force. Specifically, Xzavier and Nina requested that the Congressman assist in finding federal funding to match the current public safety budget of approximately \$200,000 and in lieu of this action that the Congressman work with the Committee to identify other grants and sources of funding to grow the Brentwood police force.

Finally, there was a discussion of the issue of repeat offenders and how they are responsible for a significant amount of crime in Brentwood. Xzavier and Nina requested the Congressman's assistance to either institute a state law that would establish a "three strike" rule or modify the current practice in PG County that does not allow Judges to consider the previous record of criminal when hearing cases or sentencing.

Congressman Van Hollen stated that the possibility of getting an earmark for this year was slim given the deadline for requests had already passed and the budget was likely to only be extended by a continuing resolution. Nevertheless he would work with us to attempt to secure some level of funding. He discussed the funding that is provide through the COPs program which is a community policing grant program that is usually for one year to support capital improvements. We will investigate this option further with staff. Finally, Congressman Van Hollen committed to looking into the issue of repeat offenders and work with his staff to identify possible actions.

All in all the meeting was very positive and the Congressman requested a copy of our report and another meeting at the conclusion of our work. Xzavier and Nina noted that this meeting opened communication with the Congressman and his staff that will allow both the Committee and the town to work cooperatively to address the public safety problems facing Brentwood and the surrounding area.

Adjourn            8:45



# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **May 1, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Shawn Cassatt, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, Xzavier Wright

Guest: Markeet Johnson of the Boys & Girls Club ([keetj2000@gmail.com](mailto:keetj2000@gmail.com))

The following is the summary of the information regarding the Boys & Girls Club (BGC) given by Mr. Johnson to the Committee:

#### **SPORTS**

- The BGC offers five sports:
  1. Baseball (summer)
  2. Basketball (winter)
  3. Football (fall)
  4. Cheerleading (summer)
  5. Soccer (spring)
- The ages of the children participating are from 4 – 16.
- Roughly 400 children participate each year, with a fairly even mix of participation from North Brentwood, Brentwood, Mt. Rainier, and Hyattsville.

#### **FACILITY**

- BGC currently uses McGruder Park for its activities, with the exception of basketball, which is played in the winter at various local schools. McGruder Park provides outdoor facilities, with space for a small storage area for the sports equipment.

#### **STAFF**

- Currently, the program is staffed through volunteers.

#### **FUNDING**

- BGC has a carnival every year to raise funds.
- Funding also comes from membership fees, currently \$20.

#### **ISSUES IDENTIFIED**

- Lack of indoor facility
- Lack of parental support – which drops off as the kids get older.
- Mr. Johnson feels BGC could use funding, more volunteers, equipment, and indoor space.

#### **OTHER**

- Mr. Johnson mentioned Colours, a music/dance group for kids ages 10-18.
- PGCsports.com lists available activities for kids.

Adjourn            9:00 pm

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **May 8, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Barbara House, and Shawn Cassatt

The committee had received copies of the Memorandum of Understanding with Mt. Rainier, the Livable Communities Initiative agreement, and the Contract Police contract. They agreed to read the contract and agreements separately and discuss notes on them at a future date.

The committee discussed the report and recommendations. They agreed to use the outline given to them by the Council as a basis for the report. It was agreed that to improve the flow of the report and to promote the recommendations the outline would be rearranged, some of the bullet points would be collapsed or consolidated. Ms. Rogers will take the first stab at that and pass it on to the rest of the committee via e-mail.

Ms. Young had volunteered to compile the interviews into one report, and all agreed that would be useful.

The recommendations of the committee should be short and to the point as a summary and the full details, including handouts from the various guest speakers, will be presented to the Town Council at the June Council Meeting.

The committee brainstormed ideas for recommendations. These recommendations will be used as sections for the report, with each committee member writing a section. The list is as follows with writing assignments in parenthesis:

- Consider transferring the MOU from Mt. Rainier to Prince George's County Police (Rogers)
- Economic study of MOU vs. Contract Police (Rogers)
- Training for residents as to when to call the police and which agency to call (Rogers)
- Training for residents for home safety (House)
- Door to door training for seniors (House)
- Community outreach for youth (House)
- Collaboration with local organizations such as Neighborhood Watch and the Gateway Community Development Corporation
- Community assistance from the State and Federal level (Wright)
- Grant Research (Wright)
- Resident training for VINE
- English as a Second Language Classes that include public safety information
- Continue BACAC

The calendar for the BACAC is as follows:

- May 15 – Meeting suspended
- May 22 – Discuss and collaborate on writing
- May 29 – Discuss and collaborate on writing

- June 5 – Combine sections, final notes on report
- June 12 – Develop and rehearse presentation
- June 17 – Present report and recommendations to Council

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **May 22, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Barbara House, and Nina Young

The Committee reviewed a draft of the report, identified additional writing assignments, and revised the schedule for completion of the report.

Xzavier briefed Committee members on the findings of her research on grants and stated she would summarize her findings for the report.

Adjourn          8:40 pm

**Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**  
**May 29, 2008**  
**Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Shawn Cassatt, and Nina Young

Committee met to discuss the progress on the report and review the status of writing assignments.

# **Brentwood Anti-Crime Advisory Committee**

## **June 5, 2008**

### **Minutes**

Present: Xzavier Wright, Laura Rogers, Shawn Cassatt, and Nina Young

Guests: Councilwoman Marlene Robinson, Mayor Miles, Peter Jones, Cpl Murphy (Community Police Officer)

Cpl Murphy informed the Committee about an increase in graffiti near the Brentwood park and tennis courts and on the back of several wooden fences in the community. This graffiti is the mark of the Queen's Town Gang (QTG) and the Little Brown Criminals (LBC). He has also noticed graffiti on 37<sup>th</sup> St. in the vicinity of the public works building. He and Cpl Kenworthy will be working with Cpl Rudinski to identify the characteristic of these gangs and to work with residents to keep a look out for gang members. Cpl Murphy reiterated the importance of contacting police if residents see suspicious activity or youth hanging around residences.

Cpl Murphy expressed a strong desire to work with the Committee to identify the crime problems and work with us to find solutions—whatever it takes to alleviate crime. He noted, for example, that in the Pennwood section, any car found there after dark is stopped and the vehicle and its owner are checked for warrants or suspended license.

Mayor Miles reviewed the purpose of the Community Policing. The objective or goal of the Community Police effort is to get Neighborhood Watch (NW) teams firmly established in Brentwood and Mt. Rainier. NW Captains are the eyes and ears of the community. Recognizing that Brentwood could never afford sufficient police protection, the purpose of the Community Police Officers is to work with the NW teams to improve public safety and surveillance.

The Community Police Officer should meet with Brentwood residents in their homes and in their community, encourage residents to get their neighbors telephone numbers and to watch out for one another, offer service to etch names, codes, serial numbers or other identifying marks on valuable items. He can help develop a public safety strategy, learn community hot spots, support NW groups, and help Brentwood better police its community. The Community Police Officer will also work with neighborhood businesses, he will inspect and do safety checks of local business and work with them to deter crime.

Mayor Miles emphasized that the Community Police Officer is not a patrol officer, while he is a fully sworn officer his primary objective is to train the community to become active participants in its own public safety. The grant is for 40 hours week and it is shared time with Mt. Rainier.

Councilwoman Robinson stated that the Community Police Officer is a resource for this Committee and as such will be recognized as a member of the Committee. Cpl Kenworthy developed meet and greet forms, submitted reports of his community policing efforts, and established a special business watch. Cpl. Murphy will build on these efforts. Since the Committee had not seen any of this material, it requested copies of the meet and greet forms, reports, and information on the business watch program. Councilwoman Robinson noted that recommendations for workshops, training, and seminars would be included in the duties of the Community Police Officer. Likewise recommendations for the development and printing of new

brochures could be completed under the LCI grant. The Community Police Officer could also identify areas where additional lighting is needed and where brush should be cut to eliminate hiding places.

Finally, Mayor Miles reviewed the status of the discussions about a four-town police force. She noted that a police department is costly, in Mt. Rainier's budget \$1.5 million is allocated to police services and it funds 12-13 officers, vehicles, maintenance, dispatch, among other items. The initial plan was to take Cottage City, Brentwood, North Brentwood and Mt. Rainier and pool the funds dedicated to police protection/public safety. By doing so, these communities could establish a dedicated 24 hour/day police presence. Both Mt. Rainier and Cottage City have \$1 million police buildings both open at the same time. The overall strategy would be to increase savings by having one chief and one building and transferring the savings to increase police protection.

Mayor Miles noted that the discussions had progressed substantially, but when the mayors of Cottage City, North Brentwood, and Brentwood changed, discussions were virtually suspended. Mayor Miles stated that Jack Johnson would support an effort to develop a "Port Town" Police force and she encouraged the Committee to recommend that the discussions be reinitiated and the progress made to date revisited.

In the meantime, both Mayor Miles and Councilwoman Robinson recommended that the Committee make a recommendation to extend the existing MOU with Mt. Rainier for the 40 hr/week officer. They recommended that it be a two to three year contract with Mt. Rainier and that the MOU be treated no differently than an employment contract.

The Committee then turned its attention toward reviewing and approving its minutes and beginning its initial review of the edited report draft.

Adjourn            10:00 pm

# **APPENDIX B**

## **INFORMATION ON VINE**



# **APPENDIX C**

## **RESEARCH ON GRANT PROGRAMS TO INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY**